

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-12. (cancelled).

13.(currently amended): A pole handle comprising:

a hand retaining device;

a first connecting element integral with said hand retaining device for detachably locking said hand retaining device to the pole handle;

means defining a pole handle recess, said recess defining means having a first wall facing said hand retaining device, said first wall having a longitudinal slit providing access to said pole handle recess for insertion and removal of said first connecting element, said longitudinal slit extending parallel to or at an angle with respect to a longitudinal pole axis and being accessible in a region of a handle head front face, said first connecting element being lockable in said longitudinal slit by a downward motion;

a second connecting element disposed in said pole handle recess to cooperate with said first connecting element;

an actuating member communicating with said second connecting element, said actuating member structured and dimensioned for access in a region of a pole handle head; and a resilient bearing cooperating with said actuating member to oppose second connecting element motion caused by said actuating member,

wherein said longitudinal slit extends from above to below a range of motion of said second connecting element.

14. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 13, wherein said pole handle is structured and dimensioned for cross-country skiing, alpine skiing or nordic walking.

15. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 13, wherein said hand retaining device comprises a toggle strap or a glove.

16. (cancelled)

17. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 13, wherein said first connecting element comprises a mushroom-like or other undercut shape for axial guidance and radial holding in said longitudinal slit.

18. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 17, wherein said first wall has opposite grooves which guide said first connecting element.

19. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 13, wherein an end of said longitudinal slit defines a stop for said first connecting element during insertion into said pole handle recess.

20. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 13, wherein a handle head front face of the pole handle defines a longitudinal opening through which said actuating member projects.

21. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 20, wherein said front face is bevelled.

22. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 13, wherein said actuating member comprises a first lever which is pivotably disposed in said pole handle recess.

23.(previous presented): The pole handle of claim 22, wherein said first lever is integral with said second connecting element to define a two-armed lever.

24. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 23, wherein said two-armed lever is hinged to a pivot axle which is disposed proximate to said first lever.

25. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 24, wherein said resilient bearing comprises a spring element which loads said two-armed lever between said pivot axle and said second connecting element.

26. (previously presented): The pole handle of claim 25, wherein said spring element comprises a pressure spring or another spring element supported on an inner wall region of said recess to push said actuating arm against a wall region of the pole handle delimiting said pole handle recess to urge said second connecting element into a path of said first connecting element.

27. (previously presented): A cross-country ski pole, alpine ski pole, or nordic walking pole comprising the pole handle of claim 13.

| 28. (new): A pole handle comprising:

 a hand retaining device;

 a first connecting element integral with said hand retaining device for detachably locking said hand retaining device to the pole handle;

 means defining a pole handle recess, said recess defining means having a first wall facing said hand retaining device, said first wall having a longitudinal slit providing access to said pole handle recess for insertion and removal of said first connecting element, said longitudinal slit extending parallel to or at an angle with respect to a longitudinal pole axis, said first connecting element comprising a mushroom-like or other undercut shape or axial guidance and radial holding in said longitudinal slit and being lockable in said longitudinal slit by downward motion.

 a second connecting element disposed in said pole handle recess to cooperate with said first connecting element;

 an actuating member communicating with said second connecting element, said actuating member structured and dimensioned for access in a region of a pole handle head; and

 a resilient bearing cooperating with said actuating member to oppose second connecting element motion caused by said actuating member,

 wherein said longitudinal slit extends from above to below a range of motion of said second connecting element.

29. (new): A pole handle comprising:

 a hand retaining device;

 a first connecting element integral with said hand retaining device for detachably locking said hand retaining device to the pole handle, said first connecting element being insertable exclusively by a substantially axial motion;

 means defining a pole handle recess, said recess defining means having a first wall facing said hand retaining device, said first wall having a longitudinal slit providing access to said pole handle recess for insertion and removal of said first connecting element, said longitudinal slit extending parallel to or at an angle with respect to a longitudinal pole axis;

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a second connecting element disposed in said pole handle recess to cooperate with said first connecting element;

an actuating member communicating with said second connecting element, said actuating member structured and dimensioned for access in a region of a pole handle head; and

a resilient bearing cooperating with said actuating member to oppose second connecting element motion caused by said actuating member,

wherein said longitudinal slit extends from above to below a range of motion of said second connecting element.

30. (new): The pole handle of Claim 29, wherein said first connecting element is self-engagable.